

OPTIONS for DEGREE COMPLETION

Step 1.....CLEP General Examinations

The **CLEP General Examinations** (CLEP) consist of a series of examinations that test college level knowledge gained through military classes or technical assignments, or through personal reading, travel, and intellectual curiosity. The Examinations measure achievement in five basic areas of “general” or “liberal” education. Each examination has a 90-minute time limit. The multiple-choice questions cover material taught in required courses most students complete in their first two years of college. There is no penalty for guessing so when in doubt, give your best guess. Each of the examinations is recommended for six semester hours of college credit. Therefore, if you complete all five of the CLEP general examinations, you will have earned 30 semester hours of college credit. Thirty semester hours equates to one year of college coursework. Additionally, the examinations are free of charge to USCG personnel, active duty, reservists, spouses, and civilian employees.

The CLEP General Exams are:

English Composition with or without Essay (The University of Phoenix is the only known institution that will accept this exam without the essay. If applying at Excelsior College, be aware that Excelsior does not accept the CLEP General English Composition exam but requires students to take the Excelsior College Composition Exam.)

Social Sciences and History

Natural Sciences

Mathematics

Humanities

Practice Test. There is a practice test for each of the examinations. The practice test are copy right and not available free of charge to the general public. However, you can obtain a free copy by working with your ESO (Education Services Officer). The ESO can access the CLEP Practice Test through the ESO Webboard at http://cgweb.lant.uscg.mil:8080/~ESO_Central/. The practice test provides an outline of the content of the test, sample questions and answers, as well as recommended reference textbooks. If you can pass two-thirds of the questions correctly on the practice test, you CAN pass the test. You can also learn more about the exams at <http://www.4tests.com/>.

Study Materials. If you don't do well on the practice test, you might want to study and try again. There is a series of videotapes to help you study for the examinations. The USCG has purchased several sets and maintain them in an Audio/Video Library so you can check them out free of charge. See *Education Services Officer Procedures Volume IV, College Audio/Video Courses* (CGI Publication P1550.1) and order the preparatory materials. The publication is available on the Institute homepage at www.uscg.mil/hq/cgi. There is a workbook that accompanies the videotape that must be purchased by the student. The workbook may be ordered on line at <http://www.comexsystems.com> or by calling COMEX at 1-800-543-6959. The price of the workbook is less than \$10.

Testing. The CLEP examinations are administered by authorized DANTES Test Control Officer (TCO). Usually the TCO is also the ESO (Education Services Officer). If your unit does not have a DANTES TCO, the ESO should be able to contact the nearest TCO and make the arrangements for your test. If your ESO is not available, you may go on-line at the DANTES homepage and go to the Test Center Lookup page and find the nearest TCO at http://www.dantes.doded.mil/dantes_web/apps/testcenters/testcenterlookup.asp?Flag=True. If unsuccessful, contact the USCG Institute for help in locating the nearest DANTES TCO. You may email and Education Advisor at VE@cginstitute.uscg.mil or call an advisor at 405-954-7234/1106/7236/7209.

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Step 2.....Other College Credit Examinations

Other Examinations. There are at least 200 additional college credit examinations that may help meet your degree requirements. The exams are also free of charge and can save students a great deal of time as well as money. The other college credit examination programs are:

CLEP Subject Examinations,
DANTES subject Standardized Tests (DSST)
Excelsior College Examinations.

You will find more information on these programs, including a practice test or fact sheet on the Institute homepage by clicking on examinations. Audio/Video test preparation programs are also available for some of the programs. See the *Education Services Officer Procedures Volume IV, College Audio/Video Courses* (CGI Publication P1550.1) for more information. The publication is also on the Institute homepage.

ESO Procedures Vol IV, CGI Publication P1550.1. On the back of the order form is a list of 48 exams for which free audio and video study materials are available. The third column of the matrix (on the back of the order form) specifies the applicable subject area. Any of the exams will satisfy that type of credit on the degree plan (i.e., Course Title – Ethics in America, Credit - Hum/3 sh LL). In plain language, this means that 3 semester hours of Humanities credit is awarded for this exam by most colleges and universities.) See the previous page for information on obtaining the publication. Upper level (courses taken in the third and fourth years of college) liberal arts courses are available and are noted by a UL in the third column.

GRE Subject Examinations. The GRE Subject Examinations are usually required for admission to certain graduate programs. However, a few colleges (Excelsior College and Charter Oak State College) will award some credit for the GRE Subject Examinations. Charter Oak requires a passing score around the 44% whereas Excelsior has established a sliding scale and the number of hours awarded depends on the passing score. As many as 30 semester hours (18 of which are upper level) may be awarded to those who pass at the 80% or higher. The GRE subject examinations cover material normally covered in ten college classes and are therefore, considered fairly difficult.

Study guides are available from the test developer, the Educational Testing Service by calling 1-800-537-3160. The cost varies between \$11 and \$13. Also, see the GRE web site at <http://www.gre.org>.

Step 3.....College Courses

College courses from any regionally accredited institution may also satisfy the degree requirements. The courses may be resident courses or distance learning courses. Be sure to note that most colleges require that students complete a specified number of credits through their institution. This information is contained in the college information at the end of your personalized degree plan.

Taking courses through the SOCCOAST (Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges Coast Guard program) assures greater transferability of credit. When enrolled with a SOCCOAST Institution, the institution is obligated to provide the student with a SOCCOAST Student Agreement. The agreement specifies the courses required to complete the degree and lists the course number for the degree. By using the SOCCOAST Handbooks (available on-line at <http://www.soc.aascu.org/soccoast/Default.html>) you can determine the course category code and locate other colleges that offer that course. Your ESO may be able to help you with the SOC Codes or you may call SOC at 800-368-5622, or you may call an education advisor at the Institute at 405-954-7234/1106/7236/7209.

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There are three colleges recognized as military credit recognition degree programs that do not have a residency requirement. These institutions are Excelsior College, Thomas Edison State College, and Charter Oak State College. Be aware that these institutions offer enrollment options where you can choose to take courses through them or to transfer in all the credits. Information on the enrollment options is also contained in the last few pages of your degree plan.

Be sure and apply for tuition assistance for the courses. The tuition assistance request form and instructions is available on the Institute homepage.

Step 4.....College Enrollment

When you are ready to enroll with a college or university for which the Institute has provided a degree plan, go to the institution's web site and download the college enrollment form. Complete the form and forward it to the Institute. Other documents you will need to provide are:

Prior College Transcripts: Any prior college work you have completed must be transcribed by the originating college. Go ahead and request an official transcript from all prior colleges to be sent to the college with which you are enrolling.

College credit examinations completed prior to June 1994 must be transcribed by the appropriate testing agency. After June 94, the Institute established an electronic link with the testing agencies and will transcript the test scores. To ensure that you receive proper credit for all examinations taken, attach a copy of your official score report with the enrollment form.

An official transcript documenting your military learning experiences will be completed by the Institute and forwarded to the college along with your application. A "student copy" of the official transcript will be mailed to the applicant. By processing your application, the Institute becomes your liaison with the college and will assist in resolving problems when possible. Direct liaison with your college advisor is also strongly encouraged.

Your application will normally be processed within 5 working days of receipt. To check on the status of your application, you may call 405-954-0072.

Mailing address is:

Commanding Officer (VE)
USCG Institute
5900 SW 64th Street, Room 235
Oklahoma City, OK 73169-6990

Homepage is <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/cgi>

Education Advisor email is VE@cginstitute.uscg.mil
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